

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
DURING THE YEAR
1901.

THE fifty-third annual meeting of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society was held at Bristol on Tuesday, July 30th.

The proceedings commenced with the annual meeting, held at 11.30 a.m., in the Lecture Hall of the Museum.

Sir EDWARD FRY took the chair, in the absence of the retiring President, Sir C. T. D. ACLAND, Bart. He said he had to introduce to them their new president, the Right Rev. G. FORREST BROWNE, D.D., Lord Bishop of Bristol. His Lordship needed no introduction in Bristol, but it was his duty to introduce him to them, and he congratulated the Society on having for its president one so eminent as the late Professor of Archæology at the University of Cambridge.

The Bishop of Bristol then took the chair.

Annual Report.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. R. BRAMBLE, F.S.A., read the annual report as follows:—

“Your committee present their fifty-third annual report. Since their last report twenty-seven new names have been

added to their list of members. The loss by deaths and resignations up to date has been thirty-one, and ten names of members in arrear of subscriptions have been struck off the list. Altogether there is a net loss of fourteen. The total at date is 597.

“The balance of your society’s general account at the end of 1899 (your accounts being made up in each year to the 31st December) was £144 8s. 11d. in favour of the Society. The balance at the close of the present account (31st December, 1900) was £21 17s. 9d. in favour of the Society. In neither case was the liability for the cost of the volume for the year then expired, or on the other hand any unpaid subscriptions, taken into account. The total cost of Vol. XLVI (for 1900), including printing, illustrations, and delivery, has been £108 19s. 6d. The thanks of the Society are due to the Rev. Prebendary Coleman and Mr. W. H. Hamilton Rogers, F.S.A., for their kind gifts of illustrations. The repairs of the great hall have now been completed, and the geological and natural historical and minor portions of the museum have been placed, and are now being arranged, therein. This has permitted of the better display of other parts of your collections hitherto much cramped for want of space. Arrangements are in contemplation for making your collections more available for the purpose of study, and for more effective explanation to visitors. A new illustrated guide is in preparation.

“The cost of the work has been large—as usual, considerably in excess of the amount first estimated; the necessity for supplemental work becoming apparent as that originally intended proceeded. This, however, is an almost invariable experience in dealing with old buildings, and the Committee trust that your Society will consider that they have acted judiciously in ‘making a good job of it.’

“In addition to the cost of the renovation of the Great Hall and vestibule it became necessary this year, on the

appointment of a new curator, to execute repairs to the apartments assigned for his residence. Nothing had been done to them, beyond repairs to the roof, for upwards of twenty-five years previously. Repairs to the drains, new fittings, papering, painting, kitchen range, etc., involved a cost of £75 15s. 9d.

“Towards the total cost of the work at the great hall subscriptions to the amount of £705 6s. 6d. have been received, including Col. Pinney’s legacy of £300. The sum expended, added to the other expenditure on the Castle restoration account, leaves a debit balance against that account of £168 16s. Your Committee have come to the conclusion that, considering the numerous calls on your subscribers—increased taxation and subscriptions—consequent on the wars in South Africa and China, and the contributions already made towards the object in question, it is inadvisable to make any further call at present upon your generosity, and they suggest, therefore, that your trustees should be authorised and requested to borrow a sum of not exceeding £500, and to give security on the Society’s property. A resolution authorizing such borrowing will be proposed for your consideration.

“The millenary of King Alfred the Great is to be celebrated with some pomp at the city of Winchester. In view of the intimate connection of the King with this county, it has been considered right that the event should not pass unnoticed, and a small committee has been appointed to consider and report on the best mode of commemoration.

“The Council have to report the following gifts:—From the Controller of her late Majesty’s Stationery Office, Westminster, 151 volumes of State papers, &c.; from the Corporation of the City of London, six volumes relating to London; from Prof. J. Earle, his work on ‘The Alfred Jewel’; and from Lord Avebury, his work on the ‘Origin of Civilization,’ etc. Some interesting additions have been made to the museum, including some flint implements, from the Egyptian Desert, found and presented by Mr. Seton-Karr. They have

also to report the acquisition, by special subscription, of the 'Dictionary of National Biography,' and that 'The Church Towers' of Somerset has been completed in two volumes, the extension to four volumes at one time suggested by the publishers having been abandoned. They also report the purchase of the late curator's collection of birds and butterflies and various books for the sum of £50. The Photographic Record Society have presented their report, which is annexed hereto. Mr. Green's 'Somerset Bibliography' is not yet issued.

"The number of visitors to your museum during 1900 was 4,740, a decrease of 238 as against 1899. This number includes 1,119 free admissions of members. The receipts from this source in 1900 were £26 5s. 2d., including sale of guide books. Since our meeting in July of last year, your Society has sustained the loss by death of one of your vice-presidents, Mr. John Batten, F.S.A., an original member, and of the Rev. George Streynsham Master, M.A., an active member and president of the Northern Branch. An obituary notice of each appears in your last volume. The Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Stubbs), so well known as an historian, and Sir Henry Dyke Acland, late Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford, were hon. members of your Society.

"The Rev. Prebendary Stephenson, treasurer of the Cathedral of Wells, and, as such, one of the *quinque personæ* of that Cathedral, died January 24th, 1901, at the age of 82. He had been a member of your Society since 1853. Prebendary Stephenson held the rectory of Lympsham (of which he was patron as well as being Lord of the Manor) since 1844, and used his position and means for the good of those around him. He was the author of a book of poems, 'Songs of Somerset,' published as lately as 1898.

"Mr. Wm. Blake, a member of the well-known West Country family, died April 1st, 1901, at the age of eighty-five. Mr. John Short, of late years a regular attendant at

your annual meetings, Mr. W. H. Evans, and Mr. R. Chaffey-Chaffey have also died.

“On the 31st January last Mr. William Bidgood, who since 1862 had filled the office of curator, coupled since 1873 with that of assistant-secretary, died. Although, as announced at your Clevedon meeting in 1899, he had been then seriously ill, he had to a considerable extent recovered his working powers, and within half-an-hour of his death was engaged in the arrangement of the fossil remains in your museum.

“Your Committee desire to bear their tribute to the good work done by him during his long connection with your Society.

“The vacancy caused by his death has been filled by the election of Mr. H. St. George Gray, for many years with the late General Pitt-Rivers, F.R.S., F.S.A., etc., H.M. Inspector of Ancient Monuments, ultimately as chief assistant. Since the General’s decease Mr. Gray has filled the office of assistant-curator of the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford. His testimonials were of an exceptionally high character, and your Committee feel gratified that they have been able to secure the services of so competent an officer.”

The Rev. Canon HOLMES moved the adoption of the report, and said that it was to be regretted that the funds had diminished ; but there was no cause for alarm, as they might feel sure that the treasurer, Mr. Badcock, kept a careful eye on the expenditure. They could not but rejoice at the good work which the Society had done during the past year.

Mr. F. A. WOOD seconded the motion, and said they could not speak too highly of all the good work which the late Mr. Bidgood did for the Society. He never spared any trouble in keeping all the contents of the museum in the best possible order.

The report was adopted.

Finances.

Mr. H. J. BADCOCK presented the financial statement, the salient points of which, as he remarked, were contained in

the report. He added that they were partly a sentimental Society, and were certainly not a money-making institution. They were, therefore, not subject to the same economic laws as other bodies.

Treasurer's Account.

The Treasurer in Account with the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society, from January 1st to December 31st, 1900.

DR.		£ s. d.		CR.		£ s. d.	
1899, Dec. 31st.				1900.			
By Balance of former Account	...	144	8 11	To Expenses of Annual Meeting,			
" Members' Subscriptions for 1900	...	285	1 6	Travelling, etc.	...	12	10 10
(543)	...			" Reporter's Notes of Meeting	...	3	3 0
" Members' Entrance Fees for 1900	...			" Repairs, Cases, etc.	...	165	0 9
(19)	...	9	19 6	" Stationery, Printing, etc.	...	11	3 7
" Member's Entrance Fee for 1901	...	0	10 6	" Coal and Gas	...	31	17 7
" Members' Subscriptions in arrear	...			" Purchase of "Dictionary of National Biography"	...	47	5 0
(16)	...	8	8 0	" Purchase of other Books, Specimens, etc.	...	15	6 2
" Members' Subscriptions in advance (19)	...	9	19 0	" Printing and Binding Vol. 45, including Illustrations, £23 7s.	...	99	19 10
" Donation from Mr. H. H. P. Bouverie	...	5	9 6	" Postage, Vol. 45	...	8	19 8
" Donation from Mr. H. H. Wills	...	2	2 0	" Curator's Salary (1 year to Xmas, 1900)	...	105	0 0
" Non-Members' Excursion Tickets	...	5	15 0	" Boy	...	15	3 0
" Donation from Rev. Prebendary F. Hancock for Illustrations	...	1	0 0	" Insurance	...	5	11 6
" Subscriptions for Purchase of "Dictionary of National Biography"	...	52	10 0	" Rates and Taxes	...	19	1 7
" Museum Admission Fees, including Sale of Guide Books, £1 4s. 4d.	...	26	5 2	" Subscriptions to Societies	...	7	12 0
" Sale of Publications	...	28	18 7	" Curator's Petty Cash, including Postage, Carriage, etc.	...	9	8 7
" Sale of Index Volume	...	6	13 4	" Sundries	...	2	11 2
" Bill paid in error	...	0	11 0	Balance	...	21	17 9
		£581	12 0			£581	12 0
By Balance brought down	21	17 9				

H. J. BADCOCK,
Treasurer.

12th July, 1901. Examined and compared with the Bank Pass } ALEX. HAMMETT.
Book and Finance Minute Book, and found correct. } HOWARD MAYNARD.

Taunton Castle Restoration Fund.

Balance Sheet of Income and Expenditure for the year 1900.

RECEIPTS.		£ s. d.		EXPENDITURE.		£ s. d.	
1900.				1899, Dec. 31st.			
By Rents of Premises	...	44	12 6	To Balance of former Account	...	213	15 11
" Deposit from Stuckey's Bank	...	500	0 0	" Repairs to the Castle	...	372	3 11
" Interest on same	...	14	2 5	" Sundry Repairs to Property	...	59	11 7
" Benches sold	...	1	0 0	" Heating Apparatus for Great Hall	...	65	10 6
Balance	...	168	16 0	" Rates and Taxes	...	6	13 0
		£728	10 11	" Insurance	...	3	16 6
				" Legal Expenses	...	5	16 0
				" Interest on Overdrawn Account	...	0	13 0
				" Sundry Expenses	...	0	10 6
		£728	10 11			£728	10 11

H. J. BADCOCK, Treasurer.

12th July, 1901. Examined and compared with the Bank Pass } ALEX. HAMMETT.
Book and Finance Minute Book, and found correct. } HOWARD MAYNARD.

The Right Rev. Dr. BROWNLOW, Bishop of Clifton, in moving the adoption of the balance-sheet, said that it had struck him that compared with the Devonshire Association, of which he was a member, the Somerset Society were a little too liberal towards contributors by paying for the illustrations of their papers.

Mr. A. E. HUDD, F.S.A., seconded, and the report was adopted.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER, M.A., F.S.A., proposed that in pursuance of the recommendation of the Committee, and in accordance with the terms of the trust deed, the Committee should be authorised to borrow and raise a sum not exceeding at any one time £500, upon the security of the property of the Society, or any part or parts of the same and on such terms as the Committee might arrange. He remarked that Colonel Bramble had told them that they had had to spend a large sum of money on the Great Hall at Taunton. They had a legacy of £300 left them, and they had also collected some £400; but unfortunately they found that that was not enough. They were endeavouring to turn the Great Hall into a museum which should be worthy of the county, and they had moved down most of their collections from places where before they were entirely hidden. Not only were the expenses of the repairs to the building very large, but also various show cases were necessary, which had to be made very strong in order to hold these valuable things. They found themselves therefore rather at a loss for ready money, and he did not think that the meeting would be doing anything rash when he told them that he supposed their assets in Taunton alone were worth at least £10,000, and if they borrowed £500 it seemed a small sum in comparison with such an amount.

The Rev. A. H. A. SMITH seconded the motion and said the question of finance had been very carefully considered by the Committee, of which he was a member, with the assistance of Mr. Badcock.

Alderman E. J. THATCHER pointed out that the resolution empowered the Committee to raise the money, but not to spend it.

Mr. BADCOCK: "We have already spent the greater part of it."

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Election of Officers.

Mr. MEDLEY proposed the re-election of the officers of the Society, with the addition of the name of Sir Thomas Acland to the list of vice-presidents, and the re-appointment of Mr. Gray as Curator of the Museum and Assistant Secretary of the Society.

Mr. WARRY seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

The election of twenty-seven new members was also approved.

Photographic Society.

Mr. C. H. BOTHAMLEY made a statement as to the work of the Photographic Society, and said that although there were many photographers in the county there were very few who took an interest in archæology. Up to the present time their record had only been contributed to by three photographers, but he was glad to be able to say that they had received numerous promises of help in this direction, but the promises were only slowly coming into fruition.

Somerset Record Society.

The Rev. E. H. BATES made a report as to the work done by the Somerset Record Society during the past year. He mentioned that the volume of Fifteenth Century Somerset Wills was now in the press, and the Rev. F. W. Weaver, F.S.A., had undertaken the editorship of them, and they would be

published as soon as possible. For the year 1902 two separate works would be issued—"Hopton's Narrative of the Civil War," taken from the Clarendon MS. at Oxford, and a continuation of "Pedes Finium," by Mr. E. Green, F.S.A., carrying down the series to the year 1400. The publications for 1903 had not yet been determined upon, but would be announced in due course.